1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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waku and his clan; (2) the strength of the far-off waku's clan; (3) the near waku's having a number of wives and no younger brothers; and (4) the possibility that the waku may want to go without wives. There are two cases of this last on record. The old men usually try to get a man to marry and marry properly. Not only is their personal pressure felt by a man who does not wish to marry, but the whole impact of society is placed against him in hundreds of direct and indirect ways. It would be a strong man with an intense dislike of women who could retain his bachelorhood against such odds.[12]

The reader may assume from this account of illegal unions that marriage is a very unstable institution. Such is not the case. Although love affairs are common, a lifelong marriage either of a galle mielk to one dué, or to him and his younger brothers through the levirate, is the normal thing. Murngin society could not exist were this not true.

From the cases of unfaithfulness and the mechanical manner of acquiring spouses through the relationship of the parents, conjugal love might appear impossible. Although rare, it does exist. The ideal wife and husband are those who remain faithful to their spouses; on the other hand, a promiscuous woman or man is disapproved of even though not openly condemned.

To illustrate a man's affection for his wife: Mun-yir-yir had had a magically powerful totemic string given him to keep preparatory to its being placed upon another's totemic emblem. No woman may see or even hear of such a thing. His galle was burning bush for bandicoots. The fire burned and destroyed the string. All his clansmen and those of the man to whom the string belonged were extremely angry. Women had been killed before for such an offense. An old man said

[12] Occasionally one hears accounts of a number of unmarried men collecting in a group of five or six, going out into the jungle with one woman and having group sexual relation with her. One woman I knew of had done this several times; the people severely disapproved of her. She seemed a woman of insatiable sexual appetite and was continually in trouble because of it. She also seemed to stimulate all the men sexually and had a greater interest for them than some of the other women who might have been obtained. Sometimes a youth who is having an affair with an older woman will tell his friends and have them accompany him to his assignation. The other men remain back when they arrive. According to one of the accounts given me, the woman says, "Who is with you?" He replies, "My friends." She says, "Do not bring your friends, I only like you, I only want to have you." The boy says, "No, they are my friends. I'll have you first, then they can." She objects, and he says, "But I feel very sorry for them. Maybe if you don't play with them they will come use black magic on you." He keeps on talking like that and the woman listens and agrees to his proposal. There seems to be considerable evidence that what is called nymphomania among modern women also exists among these aboriginal peoples.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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593 at the time that it was to his clan as though she had killed a strong
688 man. Her husband said nothing, but hurried her to a mission on a nearby island to shield her against possible attacks of his own people.
152 He risked being injured himself for this, but he was more concerned for her. This was not merely because of her economic or child-bearing value. He had an older wife, who had borne him a daughter, whom he loved even more than his younger wife; and the older woman was still a sexual mate and a very able food-gatherer. Yet he told me he would have let them kill the old woman, for she was "rubbish," but that he liked the young gal "too much" and he could not let them kill her.

593 One further instance may be cited. One of Benaitjimaloi's three
578 wives, the oldest, was notorious for her promiscuity. She had not only been beaten by him, but at one time all the people of a camp had
837 thrashed her for her misconduct. Benaitjimaloi had acquired her by a runaway union. She had been caught in a sexual relation with Bindjerpuma. The husband fought the lover and then said to everybody that he was tired of her continual affairs, was through with her, and that she could go where she pleased. Then he gave her a thorough beating. One of the older men in the tribe, and one of the most intelligent, said, "He won't give her away. I see inside his head. He beat her after he said he'd thrown her away; that shows that he likes that woman too much." Benaitjimaloi kept his wife.

595 A man and all his wives live in the same camp. If he is going on a
484 long journey he usually leaves some of them with their parents, taking
342 only one with him. When a house is to be built the women usually construct the ordinary windbreak type, but sometimes a man helps
462 them. The husband brings in the heavy stringy bark for the small, dome-shaped house used by most of the people during the rainy season. The women keep the house clean. It is felt that the house belongs to the man and the women.

595 The wives live in a fair degree of amiability, but there is sometimes
578 jealousy over their husband.

Dorng, a man past middle age, but still very active, had three wives, of whom Opossum was the youngest. He complained one day:

"My wives growl at each other all the time. The two old ones are good friends, but they are jealous of Opossum. They say to her, 'Why don't you get another man? This man is our husband. He made our children come. He belongs to us. He doesn't belong to you.' Opossum says, 'Where am I to go? My other dué are too old; I'd be the same as dead if I lived with

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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If armed conflict breaks out in a camp where a ceremony is being celebrated, the ritual is usually stopped, either because the participants are afraid to stay, for they may be killed in their sleep, or because the leaders of the ceremony become angry at what they consider an insult to their totems.

It is believed that while a totemic emblem is in camp all fighting should cease, and any infraction of the tribal law is considered a direct insult to the totemic emblem and therefore to the clan. The leader of a Narra ceremony, at which the totemic emblems are used, almost always stops the ritual if there has been any serious infraction of tribal law, because he does not want to accept the consequences of an affront to his totem. It is believed that the totem itself would seek vengeance upon any leader who did not protect its interests at such a time. The writer saw two Narra, a Djungguan, and two Gunabibi ceremonies terminated because of the outbreak of fighting. The two Narra were stopped by the leaders because they said their totems were insulted, the Djungguan and Gunabibi because of the fighters' fear of death and also because of the anger of the leader of the ceremony. Another Narra ceremony was not stopped when a fight followed the catching of two women in adultery by their husbands. The women were thoroughly beaten—less because of the offense itself than because it took place while a great ceremony was being held—and might have been killed but for their escape in the black of night by swimming to a nearby island.

The deliberate stopping of a ceremony demonstrates that warfare and ceremony have clearly antithetical traits. The great ceremonies tend to enlarge the group solidarity both in numbers and in extent of territory and to create a smoothly functioning unit out of a large number of clans, but warfare destroys this unity and reduces the limits of solidarity to the clan.

Since both traits are necessary to the tribe's social organization, a nice periodical balance has been struck; at one period ceremonialism controls the people's activities, and later war is uppermost in the relations of the local groups.

Effects of Warfare on Population

A fairly accurate estimate places the population of this area around three thousand. The genealogical material gathered by the writer shows about an equal number of women and men, with possibly slightly more men than women. This means that there are about fifteen hun-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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solidarity (ceremonial), is partly responsible for the solid foundation of the kinship structure in Murngin society. Warfare also helps to prevent the breaking of tribal laws by the threat of retaliation from other social groups. Finally, it acts as the ultimate police power in the functioning of Murngin society. It is the threat of its force which ultimately prevents flagrant breaking of tribal taboos.

Causes of War

Of seventy-two recorded battles of the last twenty years in which members of Murngin factions were killed, fifty were for blood revenge —the desire to avenge the killing of a relative, usually a clansman, by members of another clan. Of these, fifteen were deliberate killings, against the tradition of what is fair cause for a war, and because it was felt that the enemies had killed the wrong people. Ten killings were due to stealing or obtaining by illegal means a woman who belonged to another clan. Five supposedly guilty magicians were killed by the clan members of victims of black magic. Five men were slain for looking at a totemic emblem under improper circumstances and thereby insulting the owning clan and endangering the clan's spiritual strength.

The idea underlying most Murngin warfare is that the same injury should be inflicted upon the enemy group that one's own group has suffered. This accomplished, a clan feels satisfied; otherwise, there is a constant compulsion toward vengeance, causing a continuous restlessness among those who are out to "buy back" the killing of one of their clansmen. The stealing of a woman provokes the same spirit, since the group feels itself injured; and only the return of the woman and a ceremonial fight, or the stealing of another woman, will satisfy the hurt to its self-esteem, unless the clan has retaliated by killing or wounding one of the enemy clansmen. The same feeling is instigated by the improper viewing of the totem—an insult and an injury to the entire clan.

Any of the above causes for war may be given deliberately or by accident, but in either case warfare is a certain consequence. If a young man chances upon an old man engaged in making a totemic emblem, the former is killed; or if a man is accidentally killed in a fight by a member of a friendly group, the dead man's people retaliate. There is, nevertheless, considerable feeling that an accident should not cause open hostilities, but it has small influence upon the public opinion of those who believe themselves injured.

There are a number of forms of ritualistic injury. If women look

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688 672 at a totemic emblem they are killed by their own group, with the help of any other group that has been offended by their actions. The clan to which they belong is not held responsible except in a minor way. Some years ago the Liagaomir clan was holding a totemic ceremony, using its carpet snake totemic emblems (painted wooden trumpets). Two women stole up to the ceremonial ground and watched the men blowing the trumpet, went back to the women's camp and told them what they had seen. When the men came back to camp and heard of [696] their behavior, Yanindja, the leader, said, "When will we kill them?" Everyone replied, "Immediately."

The two women were instantly put to death by members of their own clan with the help of the men from the other group.

Maritja, one of the most conventional men in the society, was making a shark totemic emblem. He had hidden it in a hollow tree near the border of the men's ceremonial grounds. Some women belonging to the visiting Burera tribe had walked near it. This had been established by the identification of their footprints by Maritja and his brothers. Maritja went down to the Burera camp and said to the assembled group, "You all know I never make trouble unless there is very good cause for it. You know I look for peace, but your women have done my people a great wrong. They have walked near the place where I had my totem hidden. I shall be sick and maybe I'll die."

The Burera men said, "You are right. If they have done this you may kill them if you wish." Nothing further was done since it was not considered a very great wrong; but had the women actually looked at his totemic emblem he could have killed them, and their clan would not have retaliated.

688 Munyiryir's wife was burning a patch of brush while hunting for bandicoot. The husband had hidden the string for his totemic emblem in the bushes. The fire destroyed it. The string belonged to the Daiuror clan. They tried to kill her and would have succeeded, but she escaped to the mission with the help of her husband. He was felt to have done wrong in helping her.

A young Warumeri clansman illicitly viewed a stone totemic emblem that is situated on Elcho Island. The men of the clan followed his footsteps and saw what he had done. When they caught him they immediately killed him.

A Mandelpui boy came upon two old Liaalaomir men making a totemic emblem. When they saw him they said, "Come look," and with smiles and gestures indicated their approval of his having a closer

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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view of their totem. This was to put him off his guard; a few days later they ambushed and killed him. 688

If one of the members of a clan breaks a number of the ritualistic taboos he is seldom killed by members of his own clan. Usually the old men arrange for his death by members of another clan. If such offenses went unpunished the whole structure of Murngin society would fall to pieces, since in time the women and children would be aware of the secrets of the men's associations, and with the knowledge common, the ceremonial ideas would lose their significance. 688 696

Should a young man make a totemic emblem without the permission of the clan's ceremonial leader, the usual method of dealing with this insult to the clan would be to kill him. 688

The finding of the first wild bees' nest, because of its magical significance, is a very important matter to a young boy. Should an older man eat any of it or not allow the boy to consume the honey that was found, the father and father-in-law of the boy would start a camp fight with the man's group. 688 628

At the beginning of the dry season all the underbrush is burned off to secure better hunting, frequently destroying a log coffin. The dead man's clan is always offended, but killing seldom results, for the deed is felt to have been accidental, and no strong feeling surrounds the bones of a dead man. 688 673

The use of obscenity and profanity against a man always results in a camp fight. Profanity usually reflects not only on the man but on his clan and carries an incestuous connotation. Occasionally quarrels result from an unfair division of the game killed in the hunt, but not always open warfare, since those who feel they had a right to the game are near relatives whose solidarity is too strong to allow fighting. 578

Adulteries may cause a husband to give only his wife a thorough beating, but usually the lover is also held responsible and a fight is a consequence. The fights are ordinarily of the nirimaoi-yolno (a fight within the camp) type. If the lover attempts to steal her the more serious narrup (secret killing) and maringo (night attack on a camp) are used, because wife-stealing is a much more serious offense. 684

A number of customs attend these killings that serve as causes for war. When the body of a man killed in a fight or by magic is disinterred, the finger bones are given both to the near relatives of the victim's clan and to related groups as relics to remind them of their duty of blood vengeance. The relic is wrapped with fiber string and covered with beeswax and parrot feathers. It is placed at the bottom 765 628

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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765 of the man's personal basket. A piece of a spear that has been broken
628 off and left in the body of the victim is also used as a relic. When a man has been wounded he sometimes soaks pieces of paper bark in his blood and presents them to his relatives to be used as reminders of their duty to compensate him for his injury by helping him kill or wound a member of the offending man's clan. When a man obtains one of the relics, it is an almost absolute demand on him to kill a member of the slayer's group. This is particularly true if it is given to a young man. The older men usually give their relics to the younger males.

765 The spirit of the dead is supposed to go with the relic, and the relic
778 has magic power. It can be thrown into an intended victim's fire and
789 cause him to go to sleep, or the possessor can blow his breath against it and produce the same effect. It is often carried in the mouth during a battle to make an opponent tired and heavy-footed and to prevent him from dodging spears. Relics play a prominent part in all feuds.

682 Occasionally men are killed within the clan, but this is not a cause for war or retaliation by members of the clan or by near relatives from without the clan. A man may be such a notorious killer and cause so much trouble for his own clansmen that the entire group will kill him to stop further disturbances. At times men are slain by their own
688 clan for breaking ceremonial taboos, such as divulging secrets of the old men to the women or the uninitiated, and for viewing ceremonial objects before their initiation.

672 If a fight is on and a near relative is accidentally hit by a club or
576 spear, the person responsible hits himself on the head while saying he is sorry. Here, too, the underlying idea is to inflict an injury on the responsible person similar to the one the injured party suffered.

152 Military honor also contributes its share to the causes for war. A man
517 will brave the spears of a whole clan to demonstrate his fearlessness. The writer has seen two brothers defy fifteen men in a spear fight. The Murngin people are a brave and courageous group. Fear of death
[626] while in a fight is seldom seen. A man who shows an unwillingness to fight is called a woman and held in extreme contempt.

628 The fundamental principle underlying all the causes of Murngin
681 warfare is that of reciprocity: if a harm has been done to an individual
181 or a group, it is felt by the injured people that they must repay the ones who have harmed them by an injury that at least equals the one they have suffered. When the total cultural situation of Murngin life is
181 further examined, this negative reciprocation is found to fit into a

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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628 Darlwongo country and found the Marderpa man who, many years ago, had cut Danginbir's head off (see page 178).

628 688 Two Darlwongo men approached Natjimbui and told him that this Marderpa man chased them with spears while they were preparing to make their honeybee totem. This is a great crime among the Murngin and a deliberate insult to the totem of the clan. Because of this they were forced to take the string from off the emblem and put it back in their baskets, since the emblem would have lost its efficacy had they continued making it after this occurrence.

Natjimbui the next morning went to look for food. He was followed again by the two Darlwongo old men. When they had penetrated into a nearby jungle for some distance they came upon Natjimbui digging yams. Once more they said to him, "That Marderpa man chased us with spears while we were making our totem. Don't you feel sorry for your 678 mother?" (Their totemic emblem was called mother by Natjimbui be- 611 cause his mother was the nearest relative through whom he could trace his relationship to it.)

628 "Yes, I will do it. I do not forget my mother. I will do it tonight."

When night came the married men of the camp gave food to the single men. Everyone sat down at dusk and sang and talked. The Marderpa man was suspicious and did not trust the Darlwongo clansmen. He said out loud, for all the camp to hear, "I am all the same as a kangaroo. I sit up all night and watch."

Natjimbui sat down in the main camp. He did not sleep; he too watched. Hours went by. He grew tired of waiting and reached in his basket and took out the bone of the dead man. He unwrapped the paper bark from the relic and cut the bone in half. He wrapped one half and placed it once more in his basket. He held the other in his hand. He was far enough away from the Marderpa and other members of the camp so that no one could see what he was doing.

628 789 Natjimbui arose and walked over and sat down at the fire beside the Marderpa man. He started talking to him. While they talked he threw small stones into the fire, then he pretended to pick up a stone to throw, but instead of the stone he threw the bone into the fire. He was sure then that the Marderpa would soon be sleeping, since this was done to make the spirit come out of the bone and act upon the Marderpa in such a way that he would be easy to kill. By and by the Marderpa boy said, "I am very sleepy. I think I will go to sleep." They both lay down. Natjimbui continued talking. He asked questions, after some little time, to see if anyone would answer him. No one did. They were all asleep. He stealthily rubbed his spear with the other part of the relic to make it go straight and kill quickly, for he knew that the spirit would guide his spear. He hooked up his spear and pointed at the Marderpa, but too many 628 small boys were sleeping around the man. He took his leg and pushed

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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but the power name is not given to the food for them. The natives agree that this food is eaten because all Wongar yolno did the same thing. If the leader gives the food with his name to it to his friends from another tribe, his own clanspeople would wait until there was an opportunity and kill him, because they do not want to have that name go to another tribe.—All my most reliable informants gave me this information.

Yiritja and Dua both eat this food, providing they are from one country, which really means, if they are closely related. My most intelligent informant said this: "Dorng and Ilkara [two men of the Liaalaomir group] can eat our food which has a big name because their sister married one of our people. It is all right for the Ritarngo to eat Warumeri and Wangurri food which has a big name because we have one ranga, because we are friends. Sometimes we give our ranga from the Warumeri side to the Ritarngo and they give us rangas from the land side. That is because that duck came from the Ritarngo to us in Wongar days."

2. The string is taken from the totemic emblems, wrapped around the hand into a neat ball, and placed in a basket. The carved-log ranga (see page 340) is hidden once more in the mud of the ceremonial leader's totem well. It is said that the leader likes to have them all remain there. The men can eat no animal food, but only bush (vegetable) food, until they have been painted. The old men say to them, "You must do what we tell you. Put your head and ears to these things. You don't want to swear at your old men or your big brothers. You want to talk a good way to them. We don't want you to steal. You don't want to go running after other men's women." The old men also tell the younger ones which rangas belong to the different totemic wells and which wells belong to the various clans. This ends the Dua Narra ceremony.

Native Interpretation.—The old men say, "This makes one people."

THE YIRITJA NARRA CEREMONY

A. Preparation

1. The same general preparations are made as those before the Dua Narra.

1. The Yiritja Narra ceremony parallels the Dua Narra rites. After a log has been cut, scraped, and carved, the leader sends out word to the various surrounding clans that a Narra is to be held. A Duni

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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into certain ceremonies such as the Djungguan to regulate the ritual behavior.

The ritual sanction of offending the ancestors and totems by starting a fight prevents many feuds from breaking into open conflict. This sanction or a similar one is absolutely necessary to allow the ritual to remain an interclan and tribal affair. If the sanction and its attendant action were not fully established, the disintegrating effect of the clan solidarities and their associated antagonism to outside groups, organized by the blood feuds, would destroy the participation of a large number of groups and reduce the people who would participate in any one ritual to a residue composed only of clans and peoples closely connected by marriage. At times the blood-feud feeling is so intense that a ceremony is broken up, or the ceremony is not attended by the warring groups.

The rituals provide the only effective mechanisms which enlarge the social horizon of any individual or clan beyond his or its immediate neighbors. The kinship system with its asymmetrical marriage arrangements constantly pushes out into the larger culture and tends to increase the clan's participation in wider groupings; but in the face of the blood feud, organized on the basic unity of the clan and its intermarrying groups, this larger integration of the society on the basis of the kinship alone is impossible. Old rivalries for women are remembered and several generations of killings are not forgotten, which means that even though a man calls a somewhat distant tribesman "older brother" and is termed "younger brother" by him, the concepts of cooperation and solidarity that lie within these terms have no effect in restraining killings or the blood feud, since the feelings of loyalty to the local group and the near kin, as expressed in antagonism to outsiders, prevent an extension of the kinship system to others.

It is the larger rituals, then, with their most powerful religious totemic sanctions which do operate to restrain the local loyalties and seasonally allow a larger participation in the group. In certain instances they further tend to lessen the intensity of the dislikes of the conflicting groups following the dispersion of the larger groups. It must be remembered, however, that the mere bringing together of very large groups, as for example in the Gunabibi (to which people come from great distances), tends to create situations which may lead to battles after the ceremonies are over; but ordinarily a peacemaking duel follows the ceremony which is supposed to settle old fights and lead to a general friendliness.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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765 533 and everyone calls out the high water has covered up the rock. The leader sings he has caught a fish on a line and is carrying it to shore to take home. The tempo increases and the chorus is supposed to wash itself in the rock well water. The next song in the sequence is the talk of gathering fire wood to get the fish ready for eating, followed by the eating of the fish and the sleepy feeling that comes from gorging oneself. The last dance is that a big sea takes this totem hollow log, and everyone sings that the water has carried the log away. The leader runs and is followed by the chorus. He calls out the power name of water, then the sacred names of the totem well. The sacred name of the hollow log is cried out, and the log planted in the ground in an upright position. All the women cry and wail for the dead man. Food is given by the women to the leader. It is placed near the hollow log coffin. The leader says, "This food is for the old old ancestors. Only we very old people can eat it. You middle-aged people and young men and boys cannot have any of it," which means that the fully initiated men are the only ones who can eat this totem food (marai-in, sacred, powerful; na-ta, food). The others get ordinary food which has no spiritual significance.

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Before the bones are placed in the coffin they are broken up with a stone.[5] When the log rots away the bones are not burned but left to decay. If an *outsider* should burn a hollow log with bones in it he would either be killed or threatened with death.

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[5] A man's or woman's bones are sent back to his clan's territory and preferably near the clan well. "We do this so that when that hollow tree and bones are burned when our people are burning grass when the dry season starts this tree and bones will be burned and they will go into the ground of their own country."

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
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778 The aid of these "Muraian," in which are believed to reside the spirits of their tribal ancestors, may be invoked, and I have heard an old man, addressing a group of initiates, declare that he had lived to an old age because he had been true to his "Muraian," which, he said, had protected him from his enemies and generally cared for him. One man told me that when away out at sea in his canoe, and being suddenly overtaken by a violent storm, he had called upon his "Muraian," and by their aid had been brought safely to land.

614 621 688 796 [778] During the preparations for, or the holding of, these ceremonies[1] it is expected that all matters likely to disturb the peace will be carefully avoided. If someone commits an offence during that period it is regarded as an insult to the particular "Muraian" concerned, and the men of the horde become most violently angry. In such a case the offender must make liberal payments to the chief men of the horde, who, in extreme cases, however, are not satisfied until the offender has been seriously injured, or even killed.

561 778 [587] Though at an early age youths are given some information concerning their own "Muraian," no man undertakes the manufacture of these sacred objects before middle life, and then only under the direction of the old men. From time to time, as opportunity presents itself, a man is shown the "Muraian" of hordes other than his own. Such knowledge is in no way compulsory or essential to his taking his full place in the tribal life, but rather marks an additional stage in his education, and so increases his influence.

614 616 619 778 It is through these "Muraian" that the only cohesion between the various scattered hordes is obtained. Hordes or clans of the same moiety, though as widely separated as Elcho Island and Blue Mud Bay, hold in reverence the same mythological ancestors, possess the same "Muraian," and so regard themselves as the same people.

060 It will be seen, from the above, how wide is the influence of these totemic beliefs, and how important a place they occupy in the life of the people. Further brief reference will be made to them under the heading of Death and Burial Beliefs and Customs.

1 [i.e. "NARA" CEREMONIES — ANALYST]

184 the free use of certain elements, because they are regarded
424 as the special prerogative of one clan or group of clans. This
614 applies most strongly to matters which relate to clan totemism, but in material culture it may extend even to such
[226] things as the technique of fish capture, the right to practise some specialised method of fishing, such as the *gorl*,[82] which have been developed in adaptation to peculiar local conditions and which are regarded as the exclusive property of the members of one clan or group of clans, who alone have the traditional right, not merely to fish in one territory, but even the exclusive right to practise the technique itself. In the case of the *gorl*, which is one of the most specialised methods of fish capture found anywhere in the world, this can easily be explained, for the technique is used only in one area on the Glyde River where it is localised in the territory of one or possibly of two, clans, and is therefore regarded as under protection of the *wänärr*, the ancestors of the clan or clans concerned.

184 The restriction of the use of such traits and specialised
424 techniques as the *gorl*, which are jealously guarded, and of
[688] which any infringement is bitterly resented and visited by
[685] vengeance, often leading to fighting and interclan feud,
[628] rests upon the belief that the heritage which its members have received from the *wänärr*, the ancestors of the clan, has been infringed, and that its solidarity has suffered damage thereby, rather than from economic motives such as the desire to monopolise food supplies, raw materials, or *gerri*, as with civilised man.

181 Even apart from these matters which touch on the
184 solidarity of groups and which therefore restrict the distribution of a trait or process, the people are extremely

[113] [82] See Donald F. Thomson, *A New Type of Fish Trap from Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of Australia*, Man, 1938, No. 216.

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cannibalism which they regarded as indispensable to a hunter in order to maintain his prowess at a level that could earn for him the coveted title of *tjambait*.

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During much of the time—amounting to several years—that I lived in Arnhem Land I hunted with groups of the status of horde, which often claimed one or more *marrngitmirri*. I frequently saw these men practising their cult, and was able to make a detailed study of both *marrngitmirri* and *kalka* while I lived a nomadic life with these people.

Kalka *and* Marrngit

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The cult of the *ragalk* or *kalka—kalk*' of the Burara—, to which I have referred, is believed to be used to bring about the death of a man who has been made a scapegoat—frequently by a rite of augury—for the death of a member of an enemy horde. Often the victim will be a man against whom the deceased or his group have harboured a grievance of long standing, perhaps because he has failed to honour
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some payment such as that obligatory to one who has been present at a *ngarra*—or clan totem—ceremony, to make a ceremonial presentation of *ngata*, food (really vegetable food), or of *gerri*, goods, valuables, to the elders of this clan. Of this obligation they say 'to pay back that *marr*'—to
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propitiate the *malli* of the culture hero whose totem is involved. This *ngata* and the *gerri* presented by men who have attended the *ngarra* by invitation, are dedicated to the *wangarr* and are said to be *yarkomirri*, *i.e.* sacramental. Failure to discharge the obligation to make expiatory payments of the kind that I have mentioned places a man in danger of death by magic, even after a long period of time.

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In Arnhem Land the belief is held that the death of any person in full possession of his social personality is due, not to what the white man terms 'natural causes' but to the act of an enemy, often a person who is believed to bear a grudge, real or imaginary, against the deceased. Even death from sickness or drowning, from attack by shark or crocodile, and especially from snake bite, is not regarded as the primary cause, but merely the agent used by an enemy, or by a *ragalk* whose aid he has enlisted, to bring this about. The only exception to the belief about natural death is extreme old age, when, in the words of one of my informants, the people say 'time belong him now'—his time is spent, he has lived his life. Certain types of swellings
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and deformities are believed to result from ritual visitation or punishment by the *wangarr*, the totemic ancestors, for the violation, even accidental or inadvertent, of a tabu, particularly on the eating of foods which are prohibited at certain critical stages in a man or woman's relation to his family or horde, as at initiation, on the death of near kin, or during pregnancy. Boils of a type distinguished as *marlung* are believed to be due to ritual punishment and so held as proof of the violation of a tabu, usually on the eating of food that is *duyu* (tabu) at critical stages in a man's life.

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A man in east Arnhem Land named Nyarrang pointed to a large tumour on his neck and told me that it was due to the *malli birlma*—*i.e.* a blow from the 'shade' or spirit of an implement called *birlma*—used today as a mallet or hammer in food-preparation by women, and 'found'